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*The nations shall learn war no more.*

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### NEUTRALIZATION.

Neutralization like arbitration has performed its function in the creation and maintenance of peace in such an unobtrusive way that few people are aware of the conspicuous service which it has rendered during this century. Apropos of Edward Atkinson's suggestion, heretofore referred to in these columns and again presented in his address at the recent Annual Meeting of the American Peace Society, that the Hawaiian Islands be neutralized by the great naval powers and thus made forever a peaceful sanctuary of commerce in the Pacific, it will be of interest to recall briefly the actual history of what has been accomplished by this means in preventing war.

Neutrality as a national right and duty is almost wholly a modern conception and practice. The ancients seem to have had no idea of it. The Greeks and Romans had no word to express such a conception. It was only at the close of the age of feudalism, when the modern nations of Europe began to settle into some definite and permanent shape, that the obligation and desirability of neutrality began to be recognized. This sense of obligation developed, however, very slowly, and neutrality in practice was dependent largely on special treaties and alliances. The development of the sense of obligation and of the practice of neutrality was brought about chiefly, in the latter part of last century and the first half of this, through increasing international *communication* and *trade*. This incipient internationalism led to the gradual suppression of piracy and to the respecting by nations at war of the maritime commerce, and other trade, of those not siding with either of the belligerents. The principles of neutrality were solemnly enacted into international law by the western nations of Europe, including Russia, at the Peace of Paris in 1856. They have since been generally observed, and their scope gradually extended. The settlement by arbitration in 1872 of the

Alabama trouble, which grew out of the violation by England of one of the clearest obligations of neutrals, further strengthened in public acceptance the principles of neutrality.

In recent years the moral element in neutrality has come more and more to the front, until at the present time not only is it expected that belligerents will both on land and sea respect the rights of neutrals, but that neutrals, in addition to abstaining from furnishing aid of any sort to either of the warring parties, will also do what they can in a friendly way to bring them to reconciliation. That is, neutrality is coming to mean active peaceful friendliness to both, with partiality towards neither. It is coming to be felt also, in a general way, that all offensive and defensive alliances between any nations whatever are essentially a violation of the principle of neutrality and of the obligations which it imposes. The thought is that those who will quarrel and fight should be left to bear, as much as possible, the burdens of their own contentiousness. Thus neutrality as it has grown up within the last hundred years and imbedded itself in international law both written and unwritten, though it does not prevent war between nations strongly disposed to fight, does narrow the scope of it by keeping other nations aloof and much lessens the probability that any two will go to war, because they can no longer expect, with much certainty, to receive outside aid. This is an enormous step toward the complete abolition of war. Those who predict a great and general European war must reckon with this new notion before they do too much prophesying.

In another way neutralization has contributed much to the peace of the world, that is, by the permanent and guaranteed neutrality of certain States, water-ways, etc. Here there is sometimes something of compulsion, in the case of States, but it is a "sweet compulsion," most usually entirely moral, to which they are glad to submit as conducive to their own stability and prosperity.

The neutrality of Switzerland, which the confederation had been trying for more than two hundred years to secure the benefits of, was recognized and guaranteed in 1815, at the downfall of Napoleon, by the Congress of Vienna, the most imposing international Convention which ever met in Europe. This action of the Congress was taken not primarily in the interests of Switzerland, but in the "interests of European policy," to keep the little republic from falling under the influence of France if we remember rightly. But it was in harmony with the wishes of the Confederation, and so was in a sense voluntary as well as imposed. This neutralization accomplished two things for Switzerland herself. It put an end to certain unfortunate strifes between some of the cantons, thus unifying the country, and took her thereafter entirely out of the war politics of Europe. The 80 years of her neutrality constitute a part of the very best history of the nineteenth century.

The case of Belgium shows even more remarkably the power of neutralization to prevent war. This country was made a part of the kingdom of the Netherlands by the Congress of Vienna. Fifteen years later the people rose in rebellion and succeeded in securing their independence of Holland. The King of Holland called a Conference of the powers to say what Belgium should do. This Conference, which met at London in 1831, declared in favor of the independence and neutrality of Belgium. Holland objected and for some time tried to reassert her authority over the country, but was finally forced by England and France to abandon any further interference. The independence and neutrality of the country thus being secured and guaranteed, Belgium, which theretofore had been the battleground of Europe, became henceforth a land of peace and bulwark of peace. The country has become eminently prosperous in trade and commerce, her fine port is not guarded by a single warship and her fortifications at Antwerp, among the best in Europe, are without cannon.

Who shall say how many wars have been prevented, how much peace has been promoted by the neutralization of these two countries alone?

The Grand Duchy of Luxemburg was neutralized in 1867, and her great fortress destroyed. Her neutrality and her peace have ever since been maintained.

The Ionian Islands were neutralized in 1863-64, and later the United States, England and Germany entered into guarantees of neutrality for the Samoan Islands. Since neutralization these latter Islands have been rent with internal troubles, but neither the "great powers" nor the little have fought over them.

What quarrels and complications and bitterness and possibly bloodshed must in the nature of the case have taken place along the great African rivers, the Congo and the Niger, but for their neutralization in 1885 at the Conference of Berlin in which fifteen powers took part!

On the 24th of October, 1887, France and England entered into an agreement that the Suez canal should never be the scene of military operations and should be open alike to the commerce of all nations. This agreement was later entered into by other powers. Who is rash enough to suppose that the peace of this waterway would have "flowed like a river," if it had fallen into the exclusive hands of either France or England! It is a part of "manifest destiny," or rather of international duty and of international right as well, that if the Panama canal shall ever be constructed no matter by whom, it shall likewise be neutralized by the great commercial powers acting together.

It is of course useless to say what would have happened on the Great Lakes, but for the restraining power of the Rush-Bagot treaty of 1817, which has ever since prevented both the United States and England from sending fleets of war-ships onto their peaceful waters, but it

makes one shudder to think what might have happened during the excitement of the "Alabama" times.

We have not the shadow of a doubt that the neutralization of the Hawaiian Islands, as proposed by Mr. Atkinson, is the best possible solution of the questions concerning them now pending. We would not say that the annexing of them to the United States would not be a good guarantee of their peace and prosperity, but we do not believe it would be the best, either for them or for us. There are serious objections which can be raised to their annexation; no objection can be made to their neutralization, not even by the *New York Sun*, which argues against this method of disposing of them by casting slurs at the Cleveland administration.

#### A NEW PROPHECY OF EUROPEAN WAR.

The professional military men are always expecting war, prophesying war and many of them really *desiring* war. Mr. Richmond Pearson Hobson, Assistant Naval Constructor, in a recent paper in the "Proceedings of the United States Naval Institute," has added another to the long list of prophecies of a general European war which within the last twenty-four years have failed to come true as often as made. He believes that all the great nations of Europe will soon be at war, "on a scale incomparably greater than any in the world's history." It will break out not later than 1896 or '97. Being in the naval business, he of course sees the struggle beginning on the sea. In a year and a half the navies of France and Russia combined will be superior to that of Great Britain and then they will proceed to strike a blow at the British sea power. The result will be the overthrow of this power. Italy will then withdraw from the Triple Alliance and join the victors. The result will be France, Russia and Italy combined for aggression and England, Germany and Austria for defence. The former, having the larger aggregate populations and armies, will succeed in their aggressions. The British Empire will be broken up. Germany and Austria-Hungary will disappear from the map. France will get a big slice along the Rhine. Italy will get large additions about the Adriatic. Russia—well she will swallow about all between the two oceans. This is a "sombre" prospect, indeed! In order to prevent its realization, England must make an attack on France and Russia within the next fifteen months. "The necessity is urgent for her immediate action."

This huge "draft" of the plan of the great war supposed to be coming, coming, always coming, is worthy of the brain of a man who spends his time and talents in the construction of those monstrous demons of terror and death, modern war-ships. We doubt if England will be frightened by Constructor Hobson's prophecy into assembling her fleet and attempting to prevent the destruc-